

THE  
**APOLOGY**  
 OF  
**SOCRATES CHRISTIANUS:**

Or a Brief and Plain

**NARRATIVE**

OF HIS

*Honest Endeavours* for the Service of his Country,  
 and of the **Dishonest Practices**, which  
 have been used to Suppress them, and Oppress  
 him, with **False Reports** and **Calumnies**.

*In a Letter to a very Worthy and Generous Friend.*

*Honoured Sir,*

**T**Hough I have not been Ignorant for some time, that I  
 have been much injured by *False Reports* industriously  
 spread abroad by the Practices of some Persons of truly  
 Latitudinarian Principles, in express terms, that I am  
 a *Mad Man*, am turned *Papist*, and that I *Wrote* what I have of  
 late Printed, *through the Instigation or Perswasion of Priests and Jesuites*;  
 yet have I hitherto Dispis'd them all, because I thought the *Folly*  
 of the first sufficiently manifest by what I have so lately  
 Written and Printed; the *Falsity* of the next both by *my Pro-*  
 fession

A

*feſſion of Faith* lately Printed, and by what I daily do in the preſence of ſufficient Witneſſes, in the Celebration of the Chriſtian Sacrifice and Adminiſtration of the Ho'y Sacrament with common Bread, in both kinds, in a vulgar Language, in a Form of Engliſh Compoſure in the Reign of *Edward VI.* and recommended to the Church of *Scotland* by Engliſh Biſhops, in the Reign of King *Charles I.* and which I Printed and Preſented to the Arch-biſhop and other Biſhops, and have formerly uſed in a publick Church in the Heart of the City, for between two and three Years together; and the *Unreaſonableneſs* of the laſt, (of it ſelf a ſilly Surmiſe, and utterly improbable,) eaſily perceivable by Men of Learning in the Differences obſervable in my Writings from thoſe of the Romaniſts, both in ſeveral Opinions, and in the manner of treating thoſe wherein we come neareſt to Agreement: Yet ſince you have been pleaſed not only to do me Right very generously in my abſence upon all Occaſions, but often preſſed me to do Right to my ſelf and my own Cauſe, if not for my own Sake, at leaſt for the Service of his Maſteſty and my Country; for which ſuch Reports, though Faſe, might ſomewhat diſable me: This laſt Conſideration, together with the reſpect I ought to have for ſo Generous a Friend, have prevailed with me to give you a brief and plain Account in Writing of the *Occaſions* of all this Noiſe and Clamour, and indirect and ſhameful Practices of the Authors of it againſt me.

I have long ſince, upon good Conſideration of all I could meet with pertinent to the Queſtion, been well ſatiſfied of *the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion*; and by reading the Writings of the Ancient Chriſtians from my Youth, together with the Holy Scriptures, well ſatiſfied what is the *True, Genuine, Primitive, Catholick Chriſtianity*. By this means I have been long ſenſible of great *Corruptions and Abuſes*, not only in what is truly and properly *Popery*, but alſo in what is vulgarly cry'd up for *Reformation*: And theſe no leſs pernicious and diſtructive to the Rights and Intereſt of the Church and Kingdom of Chriſt upon Earth, and to the Power and Efficacy of true Religion, than the other, but much more ſubtile and plausible, and favouring of the Craft of the Serpent, and truly Antichriſtian. And as much as this I have ſaid before now in Print, without any ſuch Noiſe and Clamour againſt it.

Indeed

Indeed I have long complained of these things; and for this seven Years last past, since I was more specially engaged in the more immediate Service of God, I have been endeavouring for the Reformation but of some of them, which I thought both most necessary, and most easy to be effected, by private Applications for some time; till being grieved at the hardness of their Hearts, and insuperable Restiveness and Unconcernedness for such things, which I observed in such as ought to have been the first and principal Movers in such Occasions, it provoked me to a *Review* of the Roots

and Original of this Religion, called the *Reformation*, which brings forth no better Fruits. Mr. Baxter calls it the *Nominal mistaken Reformation*.

And therein I observed yet more Abuses, than I had observed, or sufficiently considered before. This Work I had scarce finished, when we had the welcome News of the present Peace concluded; which had been more welcome to me, had it not been damped by my Sense and Apprehension of the Mischiefs of these unhappy Differences in Religion, which had been the Occasion of such Wars and Confusions already, and were as like to be so still, if some good Care was not taken in time to compose them. And upon this I renewed my former Applications, by Letter to such as I thought most proper for me to apply to; and desired that the CONVOCATION might be permitted to sit and consider of these things, otherwise, if we might not have the opportunity to propose matters of such importance to the Church Collective in a *Synod*, there would be a necessity of doing it to the Church Diffusive from the Presb: But could get no other answer, but that the King would not permit it. Which I take to be no less injurious to his Majesty, than it is to all the Clergy, and whole Church and Nation.

For it is certain that the King ( and in him the Church and Nation, and his Government too ) hath been much abused by ill Advice or Misinformation both of his Right and Duty, and concerning the Major part of the Clergy and Convocation by some Factious Persons, if it be true that he will not permit the Convocation to sit and Act; or by that Pretence, if it be not so indeed. This may easily be demonstrated beyond all contradiction: And the Truth of it is like to break out ere long beyond all opposition, to the shame and confusion of those, who with their Latitudina-

rian Prudentials have made no scruple to betray the Rights of Christ's Church, and of their own Order, and the mutual Confidence between the King and People, which is the Principal means of a happy Government, by such Flattery, as no Party of Christians in this Nation, or rarely any where else, are guilty of besides themselves, and their despicable Party. But as there is no Evil, but is capable of *improvement to Good* by such as know how to make their Advantage of it, so these Evil Practices have given a just occasion to a Wise and Magnanimous Prince to demonstrate the Sincerity and Justice of his Intention and Resolution to Govern according to the Noble Principles of the true English Government, by *Restoring to the Church those Rights*, which as to any real advantage to the State, are lighter than a Feather in his Cap, but heavier than Lead in their mischievous Consequences, while they are usurped and detained, both to King and People: but would be of incredible advantage to him, if he after all would resolve to be the Prince who should generously restore them.

After I had waited for the Sitting of the Convocation till the next Sessions of Parliament, and saw it again past hopes, I began to think of Printing; and made choice of a Subject most proper for my purpose in many respects; but especially for their Judgment to whom I thought fit next to apply my self in this case, that is, the Lord Chancellor, Judges, and Gentlemen of the Honourable Profession of the Law: And in the Preface to them, I have sufficiently declared what is my only *Design* in that, and the other things, which I have since published. Which is no other than the removing of such mischievous Differences and seeds of Wars and Confusions, out of the way of such Persons, as are apt to make their Advantage of such Occasions; or at least that the Cause of my Country, that is, of this Church and Nation, in all such Differences, as cannot be composed, may be so rectified and set right, as not only to be made Defensible, so that an honest impartial Man need not scruple to appear in it; but so plain and irresistible, that no considerate Adversary should dare to oppose it. And such I think I have found by experience it may be. But to give Life to this, I thought fit not only to shew some reasons to beleive that such an attempt is not unreasonable or impracticable, but that the Faults on this side are such as make it absolutely necessary; that I might, if possible, a little awaken such as I have hitherto found so resty and uncon-



unconcerned in matters of so great importance. This is the Sum of that honest Design, which in all these things I have been labouring to promote as I could, considering what Persons I had to deal with.

\* And I expected either a fair Answer by some learned Person for the satisfaction of my self and others, or at least to have been called to answer for what I had Written, before some competent Authority, where I might have been heard, and have answered for my self to what should be objected against me. But there were other Counsels resolved on, and at last instead of what I expected I found a *Report industriously* Spread in Book-sellers Shops, and afterwards very common both in City and Country, that the Author was Mad, and the Book did not deserve an Answer. It was not altogether without a Precedent, for some Gentlemen in the House of Commons had made use of such a shift to escape a Petition in the late Queens time against them there, for Discouraging the Execution of the Laws, and Contempt of her Majesties Authority; which was so well attested as could not otherwise be answered, but by well timing that Project. And Mr. *Johnson* before that had himself been so treated by one concerned in this, and gives instances of others so served; so that it might well pass with Men of Latitudinarian Principles for a tried Experiment in a desperate Case, where no better Expedient could be found; only the difference between a Petition known to few, and a Book Printed and Published, and a sufficient Evidence of it self of the truth of the Case, to all who please to peruse it, was not perhaps very well considered; for that will discover to whom that imputation does most justly belong. But they who think fit to consider the most exact Precedents of this whole matter, may please to have recourse to the Sacred Records both Old and New, and there they may find enough to satisfy them what Judgment to make in this Case, and what Spirit it is that acts under the Sheeps clothing of Moderation.

But this did neither discourage nor divert me from proceeding in my honest Design and Endeavours for the Service of God and my Country, and for that purpose I thought fit, according to the Practice of the Ancient Christians in such cases, to draw up a *Profession of my Faith* with particular respect to the Roman Terms  
of

of Communion, with all the Candor and Impartiality, that I possibly could, but Printed off but very few, to be sent to some learned Men on both sides here at *London*, and some principal Men in both the Vniversities. From the Catholicks I received only one little Paper, to which I soon returned an answer, and heard no more from any of them. And here I must in Justice do them right, and I assure you, I never conversed with any Persons more Cautious of giving any Offence to the Government in my Life, nor have I Written, in all that I have Written any one Sentence or Word at the suggestion of any one of them: So false and injurious to them as well as to my self, is that last of the Reports before mentioned. From one of our present Bishops I received a very angry Letter, wherein he charged me with Partiality to the Church of *Rome*, but it seems had immediately that remorse of Conscience upon it, that before Night I had another from him to this effect, that he had trusted too much to his Memory; but upon farther perusal of what I had Written, he found I had dealt severely enough with the Church of *Rome*. And from one other considerable Clergyman of the Church of *England*, I received more Friendly Animadversions upon most of the Articles, though not without some warmth and a little Partiality, but no more than might be expected; and when I had waited for more as long as I thought necessary, I altered what I thought fit, and let it be printed off, and put into the Hands of one or two Booksellers. I fitted it as well as I could for my purpose, that is, as one ought to do who sincerely desires and endeavours an Agreement. The Catholicks I treated with that Respect as was proper to invite them, and yet with that plain Dealing as was necessary to make them sensible of some things unreasonable on their side: And the Protestants with that plain Declaration of such Faults on their side, as might convince them of a necessity of an Agreement, or at least of such an Amendment of their Cause as should leave all the Fault on the other side, if that could not be accomplished; and for my self did what I think all sincere Christians ought to do, desired Communion upon such Terms as I could submit to. And by this means I have obtained this Advantage; first the Satisfaction of my own Conscience, that I am clear from all that Guilt which others lie under; and next that the Catholicks themselves cannot justly charge me with either Sacrilege, Schism, or Heresy, and yet am I no such Papist by any actual Reconciliation, or so much as in Opinion, as these unworthy Latitudinarians; no less contrary

to their own Conscience than to the Truth, have maliciously reported me. But such was the answer I received to this also, as if a Judgment of Infatuation from almighty God had already seized upon them, that they should make use of such means, as by those very things, which they endeavoured to oppose, might without more a doe, be detected of Falsity and Folly, and that be manifest to all Men. And I must Confess, when upon these false Reports and Calumnies, I thought fit to trouble my self no farther than only to go where I was sure to meet with some of the Principal to see what they would say to my self, their Carriage was so Unchristian and even Unmanly as seem'd to me, as if God had left them to expose their own weakness and worthlessness before my Face and all there present.

Upon this I printed my *Letter to a Bishop*, and soon after to give an instance and proof in one particuler of those things, which I there alleaged only in more general terms, *the Great Question* concerning the Authority of the English Clergy, to make them sensible, if possible, of the Necessity of a Convocation and better consideration of these Matters, of which I had never published any thing, if we might have had a Convocation. This I believe next to their Temporalities, was likely to touch them nearest to the quick: And so it seems it did, but yet could not awaken them to a due Sense of their Duty and true Interest, so as to apply themselves to more proper and direct means to perform the one, and secure the other: But rather like Men besides themselves, they not only with Preachments and frightful Outcries against the Growth of Popery Alarm'd the Mobb, but with Appeals to all Protestant Princes, and Letters to Members of Parliament presented Occasions to some, who were ready to catch at them, and knew how to use them to such purposes, as sufficient Experience shews necessary to the well looked to in time. It sometimes makes me think of the Fool at *Darventry*, who if one gave him a box on the Ear, would presently give another to the next before him: But I scaped not so; for in that part of the City, where I not long since lived were such Clamour and Perjudice raised against me, that most of my Friends were afraid to say what they could for me; for there was part of the Knave, as well as of the Fool in it. But the mystery is better known than is necessary here to have more said of it, only it is not amiss to remember what unsuspected Consequences these Nations have not long since seen proceeding from the like occasions.

Their

Their last Effort against me, was a grievous Complaint to the Privy Council behind my back, tho' I had offered some of them to appear either there or any where else to answer whatever they could alledge against me. And this when it was enquired into, was found to have just as much Truth and Weight in it as all the rest, and serves only still more to expose their own Wise Politicks and the Weakness of their Cause. And here I cannot but take notice of a very remarkable agreement between these Practices of these *Latitudinarians* now, and the Sect of the *Libertins* heretofore, who when they were not otherwise able to resist the Truth, which was spoken to them, first raised Calumnies against the Speaker, then stirred up the People; and then accused him before the Council: But at last they gave him a Hearing before they passed their Sentence against him, which is more than these have yet done.

And now by the Truth of these shameful Reports raised and spread against me, may any Man of Sense judge, what Credit is to be given to all the rest: By the one how weak and indefensible a Cause they have; and by the other, that there is some Mystery fit to be searched into, carried on under that false and groundless Cover, which 'tis to be hop'd will appear in due time. But how far such things are to be countenanced or tolerated in a settled Government, is to be left to them to whom it doth belong, to consider. And therefore I shall here conclude when I have told you that in all this, and all I have Printed upon this occasion, I know not one Sentence or Word, which I do not believe to be honestly and simply true. And such I hope you shall always find me, and

1. April, 1700.  
Easter Munday.

*Your faithful Friend*

*and humble Servant.*

E. S.